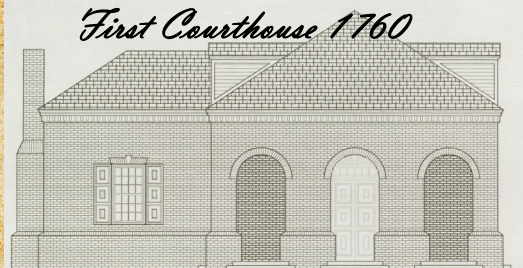


“Little Gems”

263 Years of Courthouse Construction

First Courthouse 1760



*Second Courthouse
1812*



Fourth Courthouse 2004



New Courthouse 2024



Clerk of the Circuit Court, Gary M. Clemens
Historic Records
Volume 6 Issue 1 June 2021

"Little Gems" is a quarterly newsletter published by the Clerk of the Circuit Court Historic Records Division. "Little Gems" refers to a binder of interesting references compiled by retired Deputy Clerk, Louisa Hutchison. Since the formation of the county, the Clerks have squirreled away notes which listed things to remember, interesting facts, and things that were just down right oddities. Over time these notes went from scraps of paper tucked in desks or books, to an organized binder, now called the "Book of Little Gems." The Historic Records newsletter is meant to provide you information about upcoming programs and exhibits, updated indexes, processed records, tips for research, as well as some articles on a few of the "Little Gems" we have found.

Land Records & Deed Research

Loudoun is one of only a few counties in the Commonwealth that has records dating from its formation in 1757 when it split from Fairfax County. The Historic Records and Deed Research division includes court records from 1757-1980's and land records from 1757-present. Research can be conducted by using both in-house and online databases as well as paper indexes. Our staff can provide guidance and suggestions to start your research but **cannot provide research services or legal advice**. To prepare for your visit please review our online links to indexes and county databases which provide a starting point in your records research.

If you Visit the Archives

There is a court order that establishes court security protocols that serve the best interests of all visitors to the various courts and court-related offices in the Courts Complex. Therefore, electronic mobile devices such as cellphones with cameras, laptop computers, and electronic tablets are currently not permitted in the Courts Complex. To assist patrons of the Historic Records/Archives research division, the Clerk's Office provides computer workstations with internet access so our patrons can review the websites of other historic records museums and historic records research organizations.



New Courthouse under construction

“Little Gems”

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THE MANAGER'S ORDER BOOK: Welcome to the Spring Edition of "Little Gems"

By: Eric Larson



1848 Wax Seal of Loudoun's
Second Courthouse

Greetings from the Historic Records staff and volunteers:

It's been over a year since the last publication of "Little Gems" and much has changed in Historic Records. The past year presented many challenges and opportunities for the Clerk of the Circuit Court office. Implementing mandated COVID-19 procedures transformed many of the clerk's in-person court services to provide virtual appointments, electronic filings, drop boxes for filings and relying on email and phone to request court records.

Historic Records quickly evolved from an in-person customer service to handling customer research and copy requests by phone and email. For example, in 2019 Historic Records fielded 1,987 emails and 3,423 phone calls. Since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, Historic Records answered 6,022 emails and 6,273 phone calls. Prior to 2020, Historic Records provided most of its copy request by paper, however, in the last

year the majority of the records requested have been sent in digital format (PDF).

Historic Records staff also provided support to the clerk's Recording and Public Service Divisions. The Land Recording Division experienced a substantial increase in refinanced Deeds of Trust in 2020 and the Historic Records' staff assisted by scanning and indexing new filings. Staff was trained to work with the Public Services Division in performing virtual marriage license and notary applications.

Despite all the above challenges, Historic Records was able to maintain its preservation projects, although on a smaller scale compared to the years before COVID-19. Staff indexed the 1757-1774 tithable books and the 1969-1974 marriage index. A COVID-19 special collection was created to document the clerk's office's response to the crisis. In-house conservation continued with the flat filing of wills and judgment packets.

By securing additional funding, Historic Records was able to contract out some large scanning projects in 2020 which included the 1925-1948 Land Tax Books, 1757-1865 Marriage Bonds, Indenture/Bound out children and the 1757-1865 Free Black Records. When these projects were completed in May 2021, over 30,000 documents were digitized. I'm pleased to announce that all of Loudoun's marriage licenses, marriage bonds and Free Black records are all digitized.

In 2020, Historic Records secured a \$5,000 matching grant from the Virginia Humanities. This matching grant provided funding to digitize all the county's 1757-1865 Free Black records. One of the criteria of the grant was to make [the Free Black PDFs available online](#). The grant also provided funding for a program on the conservation and history of the above records. Originally planned as an in-house event, Historic Records switched to a virtual program in partnership with Loudoun County Public Libraries.

Historic Records received a \$16,000 conservation grant in 2020 from the Library of Virginia. The grant will conserve two will and one deed order books from the eighteenth century and a 1850 Court Minute Book. Another grant for \$8,511 from The Daughters of the American Revolution Ketchikan Chapter will conserve the remaining 1757-1786 county tithable books.

Lastly, 2020 saw changes in the Historic Records' staff. I was honored to have two outstanding employees in Alyssa Fisher and Sarah Markel, who during their tenure made great contributions to the historic records division. These two devoted employees moved on to new career opportunities since the distribution of our last Little Gems. I am now honored to have Shannon Fuller and Lori Kimball on the historic records team.

My staff and I look forward to seeing many of you in the near future to once again experience Loudoun's prolific collection of historic court records.

Historic Records Latest “Little Gem”: Dr. Mordecai Wyatt Johnson’s Loudoun Farm-By Lori Kimball

One of the interesting things about working in the Historic Records Division at the Loudoun County Courthouse is the serendipitous finds when searching for something else. We had one of those occurrences recently when looking at the 1963 tax records for the Lovettsville District. At that time, the records were separated by race, and we were looking for the name of a property owner with land on the Short Hill Mountain. The name below his caught our eye – Mordecai W. Johnson, owner of 124 acres, with a mailing address of Howard University.

We quickly learned that Dr. Mordecai Wyatt Johnson was the first African American to serve as permanent president of the University, from 1926 to 1960. He was born in 1890 in Paris, Tennessee, to parents who had once been enslaved. Mordecai was a renowned preacher who was pastor of the First Baptist Church in Charleston, West Virginia, from 1917 to 1926. While there, he helped to organize the Charleston branch of the NAACP.

COLORED						
General Reassessment of the Fair Market Value of Tracts of Land, Lots Standing Timber Trees, Buildings and Improvement						
In LOUDOUN County, in LOVETTSVILLE Magisterial District,						
NAME OF OWNER	P. O. ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	Number of acres in each tract	Value of land or lot and standing timber trees owned by the same person, or value of land or lot exclusive of standing timber trees, not owned by the owner of the land or lot.	Value of buildings and improvements	
ANDERSON, RAY V. ESTATE	C/O RAY V. ANDERSON, JR. LOVETTSVILLE, VA.	10-2	2.25	80	200	
BEANER, ROBERT	C/O ROSEMARY CLARKE LEESBURG, VA.	2-91B	1	10		
BERRY, EDWARD E. & MILDRED	LOVETTSVILLE, VA. C/O GEORGE WIRE	2-7	1	120	100	
CROMPTON, MARY JANE	LOVETTSVILLE, VA. C/O CARL WARDEN, 11 SOUTH 9TH ST.	2-91	.25	200	100	
GRIFFITH, WARREN E. ESTATE	NEWARK, NEW JERSEY	2-91	7	120		
JOHNSON, MORDECAI W. ET UX	HOWARD UNIVERSITY WASHINGTON, D. C.	2-5	85	1660	1280	
		2-2	11	1060	1600	

Dr. Mordecai Wyatt Johnson 1963 Land Reassessment Land Tax Book, Lovettsville District., 1963

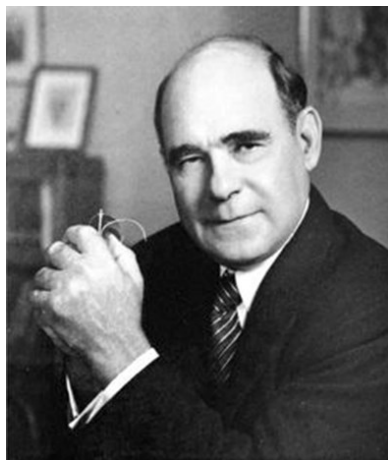


Photo courtesy of Find A Grave

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/86497097/mordecai-wyatt-johnson>

Dr. Johnson was elected unanimously to be President of Howard University. His accomplishments included raising millions of dollars for the school and increasing student enrollment from 2,000 to over 10,000. During his tenure, he appointed Charles Hamilton Houston to the position of Dean of the Law School. Mr. Houston was a prominent Black lawyer who was the first Special Counsel of the NAACP and litigated numerous cases involving unequal treatment of Blacks. In Loudoun County, he led the first all-Black legal team to argue a case at the Loudoun Courthouse and later assisted a group of local citizens in their fight to get a high school built for Black students.

We don’t know what prompted Dr. Johnson to purchase land in Loudoun, but he might have become interested as the result of a speaking engagement for the Emancipation Association’s annual gathering. Prominent people, such as Dr. Johnson, were often keynote speakers at the Emancipation Grounds in Purcellville. Or he might have learned about Loudoun through his friendship with Mr. Houston.

In June of 1931, Mordecai and his wife, Ethelyn Gardner Johnson purchased two tracts of land in Neersville, Lovettsville District, across the Potomac River from Harper’s Ferry, West Virginia. The property in total was 124 acres and known historically as part of the George Neer Farm. A small portion of the property had river access. The adjacent property to the west was the Washington Rod and Gun Club. The land stretched eastward to the foot of the Short Hill Mountain.

We presume that the Johnsons bought the property as a weekend country home, especially for the summer months when many Washingtonians came to Loudoun for the cooler and fresher mountain airs. Tax records show that a new building, probably a house, was added in 1933 or 1934. Dr. Johnson retired from the University in 1960. The Johnsons kept their property until 1967 when it was sold to a couple whose descendants still own it today.

Courthouse and Ground

263 Years of Loudoun’s Court Complex:

The First Court House 1758-1811 By Eric Larson

In 2020 construction began on adding another courthouse to the current courthouse complex. This additional courthouse will provide more courtrooms for Loudoun’s General District and space for agencies supporting the county judicial system. Since the formation of Loudoun County in 1757, there have been five major construction projects to the county’s courthouse complex: (1758-1761), (1809-1812), (1893-1894), (1999-2004) and (2020-2024).

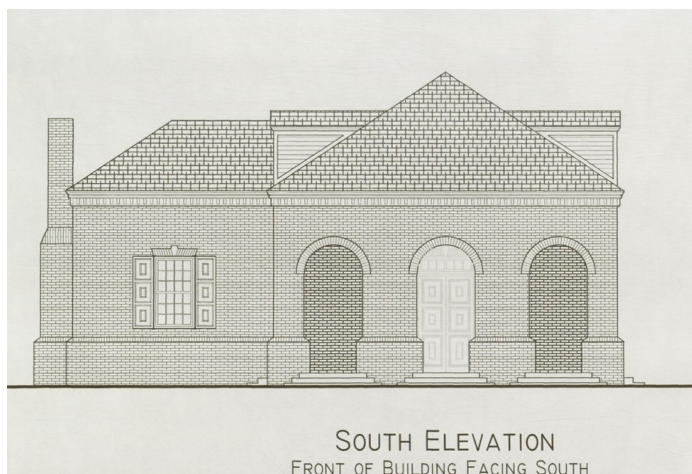
All the construction performed on the grounds of the courthouse complex in last the 263 years were for: 1) Building a new courthouse 2) Replace existing courthouse, and renovations 3) Expansion of current courthouse structures. Loudoun never lost a courthouse to fire, war or environmental conditions. The first and second courthouses were simply replaced with another structure to better serve the population.

In the years of between constructing new courthouse, the grounds and buildings were continuously being renovated and repaired. For example, the second courthouse required extensive repairs after the Civil War. From 1870 to the 21st century, the court complex expanded outside its original one-acre parcel to accommodate additional structures to meet the demand for an expanding court system.

In the following, the evolution of the courthouse complex will be told in the words, pictures and drawings from the Court Order Books, Board of Supervisors Minute Books, newspapers and newsletters. These above sources will provide primary accounts of the courthouse history, descriptions of construction, expansion and upkeep of Loudoun County’s court complex by those who were involved.

“We have caused Advertisements to be set up requesting workman meet to undertake the building and erecting a Courthouse, Prison and Stocks for the use of the said County and having met on the day appointed, Aeneas Campbell, Gent. Undertook the building the Courthouse for the sum of Three hundred and sixty five pounds Current Money...”

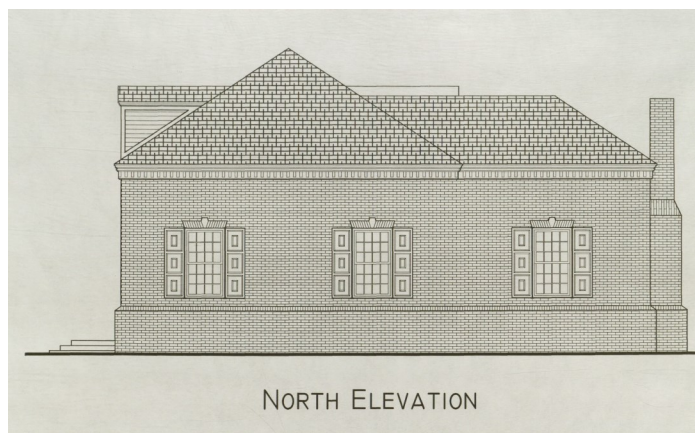
Order Book A, page 166, 167 – Sept. 13, 1758

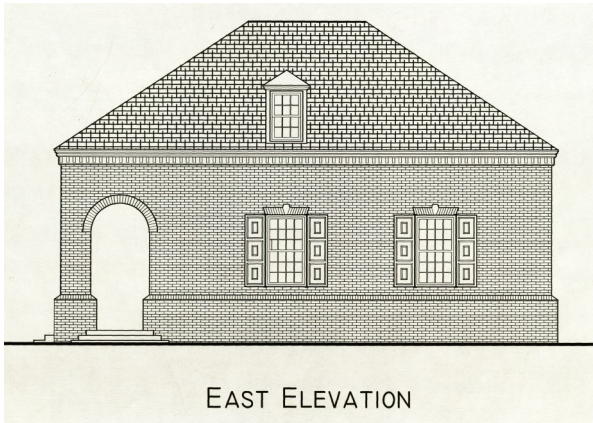


“A Court house to be built for this County on the Lands of Nicholas Minor, Gent. After the following Dimensions, to wit, To be of Brick 40 by 28, Jury Room 16 by 16 with an outside Chimney and fire place 8 feet in the clear from the foundation to the Surface 2 feet from the surface to the water table 4 feet from thence to the Joist 10 feet.”

Order Book A, page 142,143 – August 9, 1758

Conceptual Drawings of the First Courthouse, 2007
Clerk of the Circuit Court





Conceptual Drawing of the First Courthouse, 2007

"The Jointers and Carpenters to be in the following manner, all the framing to of white oak, the Windows well framed and cased to consist of 24 lights each 8 by 10, five Windows in the Courthouse, two on one side, two in the end where the Justices sit & one in the side on which the Juryroom is built, two Windows in the Juryroom opposite to each other, the Sashes to be made of well Seasoned Pine of at least 1 ¼ Inches after they wrought, paneled Window shutters with Hook & Bolts. The Doors to be of paneled Work of proper stuff well seasoned, the front to be 8 by 4 ½ folding with proper Bolts and Locks. Two Galleries for Juries with Stairs leading to each from the Floor raised to a proper height sufficient for a person to walk under, with Rails and Banisters, the Justices seat to be circular, raised to a proper height with a Lawyer's Bar and both railed and Bannistered, the

floor of the Courthouse 5 feet before Lawyer's Barr to be laid with Inch Plank together with the Jury room which is to be finished above Stairs with two Dorman windows, a small Stair case leading thereto fixed in the most convenient place for that purpose, the floor of the Courthouse from 5 feet from the Lawyer's Bar to be laid with Bricks or Tyle made of the dimension of 8 by 8 & to finish the whole in a Workmanlike manner, likewise two Boxes for the Sheriff and his Deputy fixed at the foot of each of the Stairs leading to the Juries Galleries."

Courthouse Bell & Invoice

"George Johnston and John Thornton, Gent. Are appointed and desired to agree with some person to erect a belfry and hang the Bell imported for the use of the County and bring in their Account at the laying of the next Levy."

Order Book E, page 490, an. 15, 1773

Dr. The County of Loudon to Mr. William Grayson			
1769	To 1 charge Bell w ^g 3.0.11	10	23.2.8
July 3 rd	To 1 charge Bell w ^g 3.0.11	16	6.8
	To 1 charge on work whell & howling		3.10.6
	Proff. Carps boards &c		11.
	Cash for bill & box for whell		23.2.8
	To 1 charge shipping charge &c 7.6		1.15.9
	Freight 22.12.12		14.11.2
	To 1 charge for building a frame		30.13.6
	Advance of Agreement 10.12.12		3.1.14
	Advance for currency		33.14.10
			8.8.72
			43.6.8

1769 Invoice for the Courthouse Bell

In August 1768 a bell was ordered to be imported for the use of the Court House and a belfry constructed for it. In July 1769, William Grayson submitted a bill for 43 pounds 6 shillings and 8 pence for the bell, shipping, freight and building a frame to hang it.

Courthouse Records 1760-1770



1769 Courthouse Bell
Courthouse Records 1760-1770

The Second Courthouse 1811-1894

"Ordered that Israel Lacey, William Ellzey, Wilson C. Selden, John Littlejohn, Samuel Murrey and Charles F. Mercer be commissioners to advertise and receive propositions for the purchase of the public lot & buildings in the Town of Leesburg and also to receive propositions for the erection of a new Courthouse, Jail and Clerk's Office in the said Town as well for alterations and repairs of the old buildings and make report to the next court."

Minute Book 2, page 396, May 8, 1809

"County Levy To be laid out for the courthouse &c \$3000.00"

Minute Book 3, page 427, May 15, 1810

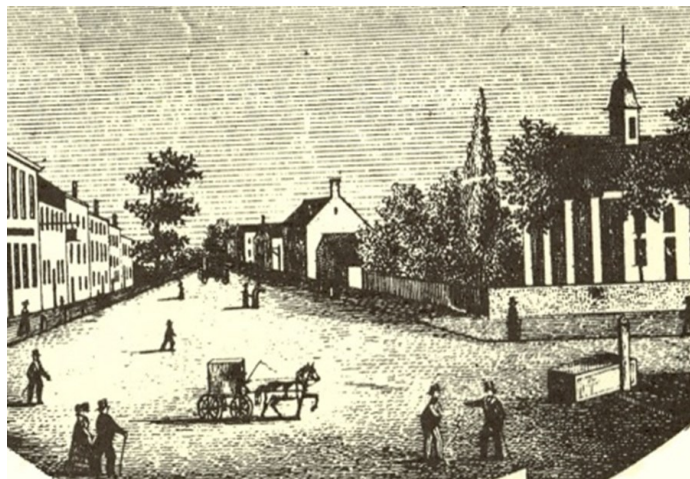
"County Levy For the Courthouse and Jail. \$5000.00"

Minute Book 5, page 29, June 13, 1811



Loudoun's Second Courthouse, 1815
Christian Ignatius La Trobe, Watercolor
Library of Congress

View of the Second Courthouse from Market and King St.



"Ordered that the Clerk of this County be authorized to request the Mayor, Recorder & Common Council of the town of Leesburg to cause the Streets called King & Market to be paved & that the Court pledge the faith of the County to levy the amt. contracted for to have opposite the public square on each street in the same proportion of individuals for their property."

Minute Book 4, page 437, March 12, 1822

"County Levy for paving the floor of the Court house in the rear of the Bar, for conducting the waterpower from the iron Pipes into the Jail Yard including a pump, for putting a new roof on the Court house and other expenses on the same subject to the order of the Commissioner of public Buildings. \$400.00..."

Minute Book 9, page 164, June 15, 1844



Undated photograph of the Second Courthouse

Civil War Years 1861-1865

Ordered that the Clerk of this Court (at the expense of this County) remove to a place of safety, and there keep in his custody, the records of this Court for the last 2 years, upon the approach of the public enemy."
Court Order Book 16, May 13, 1861, page 534

Ordered, that the Clerk of this Court, (at the expense of this County), remove to a place of safety, and there keep in his custody, the records of this Court for the last 2 years, upon the approach of the public enemy.

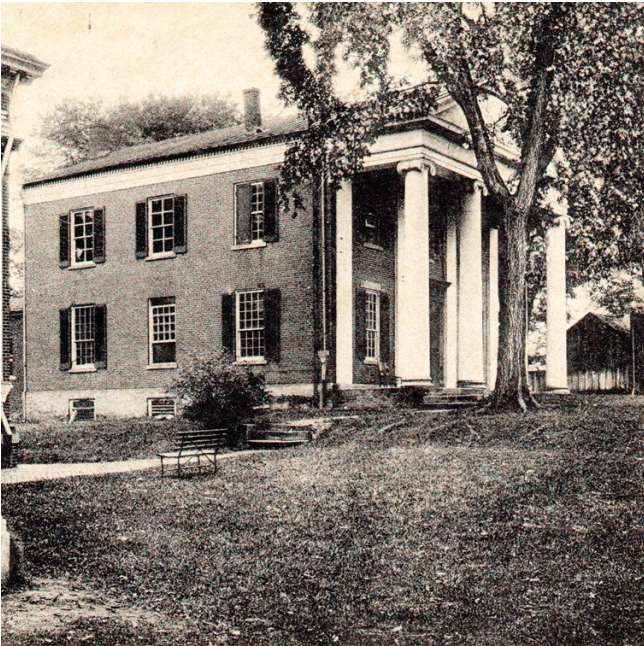
On May 13th 1861 the Court authorized the Clerk to remove the county records to a place of safe keeping in the event of the approach of Northern troops. The Records were taken to Campbell County by Clerk of the Court George K. Fox, Jr. in February 1862 and remained there until the order to return them was issued in 1865. No court was held in Loudoun County from February 1862-July 1865. Unlike most Virginia's county courts, all of Loudoun's records and its courthouse survived the war.

Loudoun County			
To Wallace & Bentley			
1865	Sept 12	71 ft. Pannel pine 8.9	5.68
"	" 22	26 ft. " " 5.0	2.08
"	" 25	16 ft. Scantling a 2.4	.64
"	" "	30 ft. Rough Scantling 23 1/4	.83
"	Oct 2	15 ft. Pannel pine 8	1.20
"	" "	2 for Sides a 16 1/4	.32
"	" "	1 Paper Brads a	.25
"	" 6	23 ft. Cullings a 1.4	.92
"	" 17	108 ft. Scantling a 5	4.32
"	" "	51 ft. Seconds a 5	2.55
"	" 18	128 ft. " " a "	6.40
"	" "	72 ft. " " a "	3.60
"	" 21	161 ft. Pannel pine 8.9	12.88
"	" "	37 ft. 5/4 Selects a 6	1.62
"	" "	78 ft. 1/4 Seconds a 5	3.90
"	" 23	10 lbs nails a 12 1/2	1.25
"	" "	166 ft. Seconds a 5 1/4	8.30
"	" "	35 ft. Cullings & Scantling 1 1/2	1.40
"	" "	99 ft. Seconds a 5 1/2	4.95
"	" "	80 ft. Scantling a 4	3.20
"	" "	31 ft. Cullings a 4	.84
"	" "	10 lbs nails a 12 1/2	1.25
"	" 24	111 ft. Cullings a 4	4.44
"	" 25	750 lb pine Shingles 13.00	9.75
"	" "	6 lbs nails a 12 1/2	.75
Carried over			83.32

"Ordered that James M. Wallace and R. M. Bentley be appointed a committee with power to contract for, and cause to be repaired, the windows of the Courthouse, the railing around the Clerk's desk, to have the necessary accommodations provided for the bar, and a privy erected for the use of the Court and the Clerks."
Minute Book 17, page 97, Aug. 16, 1865

1865 Invoice for making repairs to the courthouse
Courthouse Records 1865-1870

1865-1893 Reconstruction Years



"The Trustees of the Leesburg Academy having made to this Board a proposition to sell the Academy building and ground to this Board for a Clerk's office.... We will sell Academy Building and lot to the County of Loudoun for the sum of \$7500..."

BOS Minute Book 1, 1870-1882, July 1873

The clerk's office in the 1920s.
This building was the Leesburg Academy from 1844-1873. In 1873 the academy sold it to the county to use as the clerk's office.

"On motion Jas. M. Hoge & P.W. Carper was appointed a committee to ascertain the condition of the roof on the Court house and whether it could be repaired or not and report to the next Board."

Supervisor's Minutes, page 119 , Dec. 17, 1877



"Ordered that \$500 be levied for the repairs to the Courthouse and P.W. Carper & Jas. M. Hoge appointed a committee to let the said repairs out by contract."

Supervisor's Minutes, page 124 , July 19, 1878

Third Courthouse 1894

"The present court-house was built eighty years ago. Its rests upon the ground and part of the floor is brick. The effluvia of all these years was soaked into the floors and sides, and on a damp day when the crowd has gathered, the atmosphere that court litigants, lawyers and jurors have to breathe is simply fearful. It is an unhealthy place and year after year, of course, has gotten more so. Besides this the ceilings are tumbling down and the walls are cracked. Something has to be done."

J.B McCabe, *The Mirror*, February 15, 1894



This picture dates after 1906 and is one of the earliest photographs of the third courthouse. The courthouse is still used for court and programs.

"...Court House" was built by the Board of Supervisors of this County with Wm. C. West of Richmond as Architect and Norris Bros. of Leesburg Contractors at a cost of Eleven thousand dollars (\$11000); that the corner stone was laid on April 24, 1894 ..."

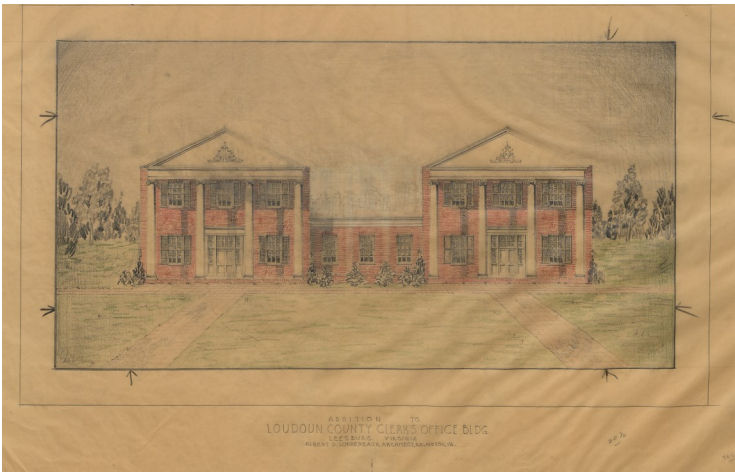
"Ordered that the Court House be lighted by Electricity, and that John H. Nelson, Agt. And attorney for the Leesburg Electric Light Company be and is hereby authorized to wire the said Courthouse and hang a chandelier No. 8631 as shown in catalogue, and place in proper places thirty lights, the whole not to exceed One Hundred Dollars (\$100)."

BOS Minutes, page 324, July 25, 1895



This 1950s photograph of the inside of the third courthouse shows members of the Board of Supervisors, Circuit Court judge, Commonwealth Attorney, Sheriff, and Superintendent of Schools.

The Clerk of Circuit Court and County Government Expansion 1950s-1970s



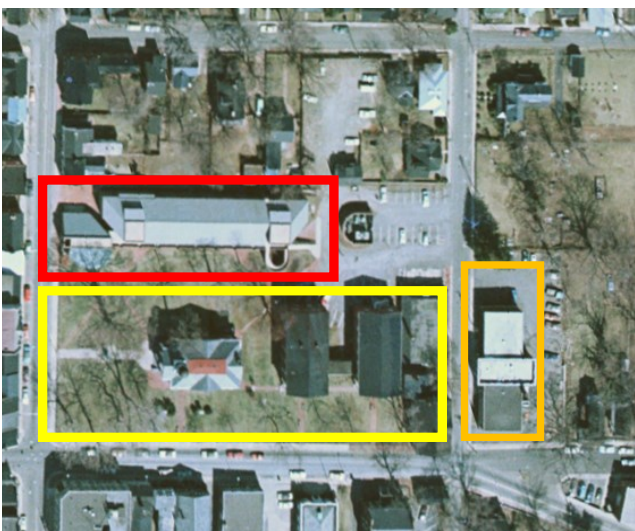
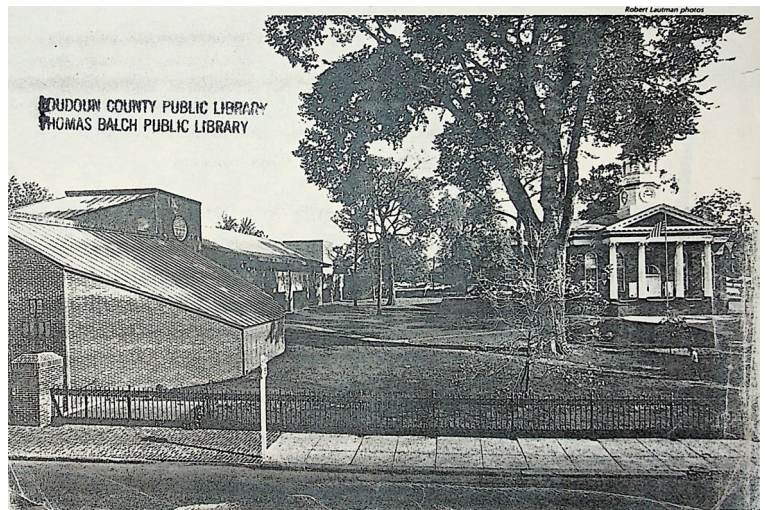
"Mr. Lueders Architect was present and discussed the latest plans for the Clerk's Office addition. He estimated that the cost of the new building and alterations of the old building would be \$125,000 which would include heat, lights, air conditioning and fire-proofing of new building. "
Board of Supervisor Minutes, September 2, 1958

Conceptual Drawing of the Clerk's Office Addition
Clerk of the Circuit Court

By the 1950s, the 1834 academy (The building on the left side of the above drawing) was too small for the Clerk of the Circuit Court. More office space was also needed for Loudoun County government. The county hired Albert D. Lueders Architectural firm of Arlington, Virginia to design the expansion at the old academy building. The new addition would mirror the 1834 academy building and the two structures were connected by a hallway. This part of the court complex was expanded in the early 2000s and serves as the entrance to the county court complex.

This photograph is the old Loudoun County Office building before it was renovated and expanded during the 1999-2004 courthouse expansion. In 1975, the County of Loudoun opened a new 36,000 sq. ft. building to house the county's offices and the Board of Supervisors.

Courtesy of the Thomas Balch Library



Loudoun County Government Building

Courthouse Complex

Loudoun County Jail

Aerial Photograph of the courthouse, County Building and jail, 1979
Courtesy of Loudoun Mapping and Geographic Information

Courthouse Expansion 1990s-2004

“Court facilities in Loudoun County are not secure, are in need of renovation and repair at best, and are otherwise inadequate to meet the needs of the public, the courts, the court staff and the clerks. Improved court facilities were not a luxury, they were a necessity.”

Letter, Compiled by the judges of the Loudoun County Courts. Recommendations Toward a New Courts Complex in Loudoun County, January 2, 1996



Aerial Photograph of the courthouse and grounds and jail, 1996 prior to construction.
Courtesy of Loudoun Mapping and Geographic Information

Courthouse Complex

Loudoun County Jail

Court expansion from 1999 to 2004 provided further courtrooms and office space to the county’s three courts: Circuit Court, Juvenile and Domestic Relations and General District Court. The former Loudoun County Office building was expanded and renovated to provide more space for the Clerk of the Circuit Court, a Law Library and agencies supporting the court system. It was during this expansion that space was provided to establish the clerk’s Historic Records Division in 2004.



Aerial Photograph of the courthouse construction in 2000.
Courtesy of Loudoun Mapping and Geographic Information

"In 1990 it became clear that the Old Courthouse and court facilities were woefully inadequate. In response the Loudoun County government hired the architectural firm of Davis and Carter to make a ten year forecast of the Courts' space needs and to prepare a campus plan for renovation."

Letter, Compiled by the judges of the Loudoun County Courts. Recommendations Toward a New Courts Complex in Loudoun County, January 2, 1996

"...eleven firms pre-qualified for the construction, and the Board of Supervisors awarded the final \$20.9 million contract to the Charles T. Topkins company on March 17, 1999."

History of the Loudoun County Courts: 1st Edition 2004



The Courtyard during the 1999-2004 Construction

The trailers were used for jury deliberation and witness' waiting rooms until the new court complex was completed.

Clerk of the Circuit Court



"As of September of 2000, Phase I, the 33 square foot renovation of the old County Administration Building and construction of a new 83,942 square foot building was progressing on schedule. Phase II-the 26,412 square foot renovation of the Clone Building and Academy "hyphen"- was excepted to begin thirty days after the completion of Phase I...."

History of the Loudoun County Courts: 1st Edition 2004

Aerial Photograph of the courthouse, 2004

Courtesy of Loudoun Mapping and Geographic Information

Into the future: 2021 and Beyond

"During its September 19, 2019 business meeting, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors awarded a contract for the construction of the new Loudoun County Courthouse to Costello Construction of Maryland, Inc. An Invitation for Bid was issued on April 25, 2019. Costello was one of six companies which put in a bid for the contract by the July 10, 2019 deadline. The winning bid was \$54,043,140."

www.loudoun.gov/courts-expansion



Aerial photograph of the courthouse and grounds in 2019, a year before construction started on the new courthouse. The county jail was demolished in 2007 after the new jail complex was completed off Sycron Road.

Courtesy of Loudoun Mapping and Geographic Information

Court Complex and Grounds 2019

Former County Jail Site

"Construction on the new Loudoun County District Courthouse in downtown Leesburg is scheduled to begin Monday, April 6, 2020. As a result, there will be changes to the current parking areas utilized by those who work and do business at the courthouse."

www.loudoun.gov/courts-expansion



Construction begins on the new courthouse, April 2020
Clerk of the Circuit Court



“The courthouse itself was designed to blend seamlessly with the existing courts campus while also remaining in scale with the surrounding Leesburg structures. It is historically contextual, yet has the modern features required for a functioning court system in the 21st century. The design includes a public open space in front of the courthouse while still providing the security needed for safe courts operations. The new courthouse will connect to the existing courts building through an underground tunnel.”

<https://www.dewberry.com/projects/loudoun-county-courts-complex-expansion-phase-iii>

OVERALL PROJECT SCOPE



New courthouse and grounds when completed in 2024



LOUDOUN COUNTY COURTHOUSE PHASE III

4

“The Courts Complex Expansion project includes the design and construction of a new 95,000-square-foot Loudoun County District Courthouse and renovation of existing courts facilities, including new parking facilities.”

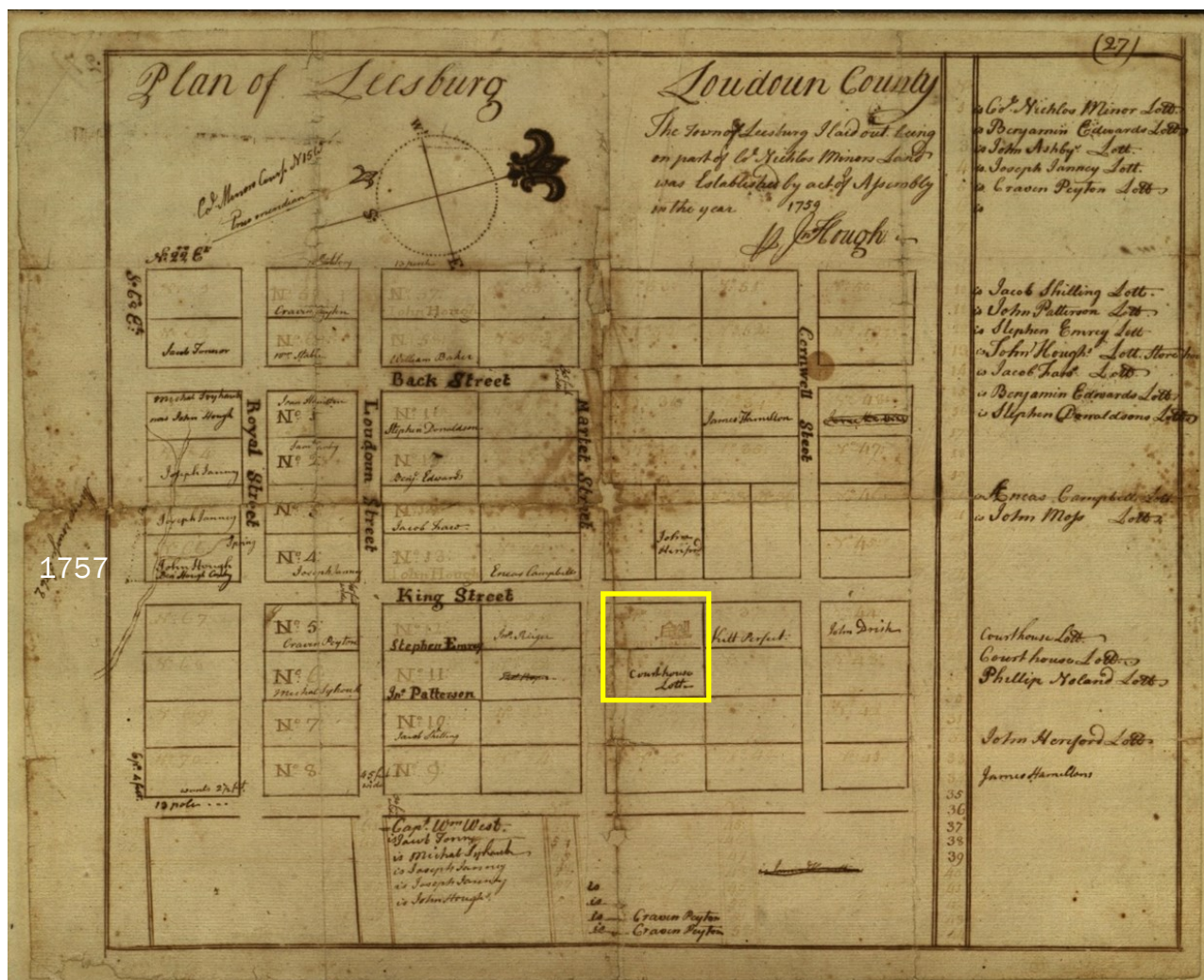
www.loudoun.gov/courts-expansion



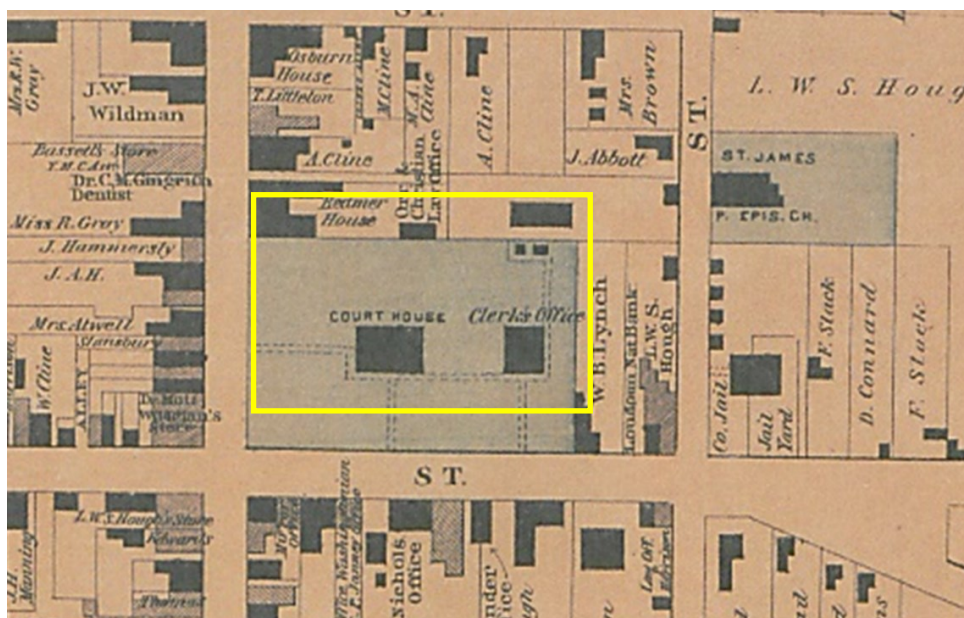
When the new 95,000 sq ft. courthouse is completed, the new complex will house the General District Court and agencies that support Loudoun’s court system. When the General District Court moves to the new courthouse, the current court complex will be renovated to provide more space for the Circuit Court, Juvenile Domestic Relations Court and the Clerk of the Circuit Court.

New Courthouse, April 2021
Clerk of the Circuit Court

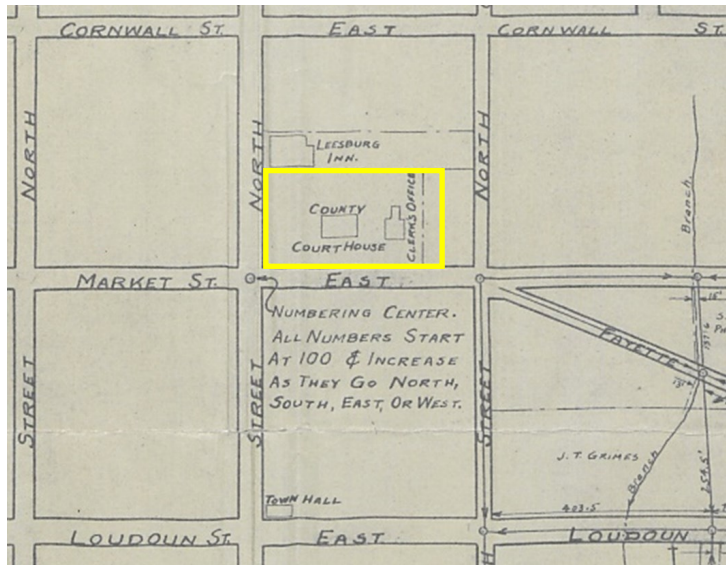
Courthouse Lot 1757-2021



Leesburg Plat, 1759
Original courthouse lot was only one acre.



Courthouse Lot, 1878
By the 1870s, the courthouse lot expanded to 1.5 acres.
John Grey's Map of Leesburg, 1878



Plat of Leesburg, 1937
 The courthouse lot was 1.5 acres.
 Historic Records Plats

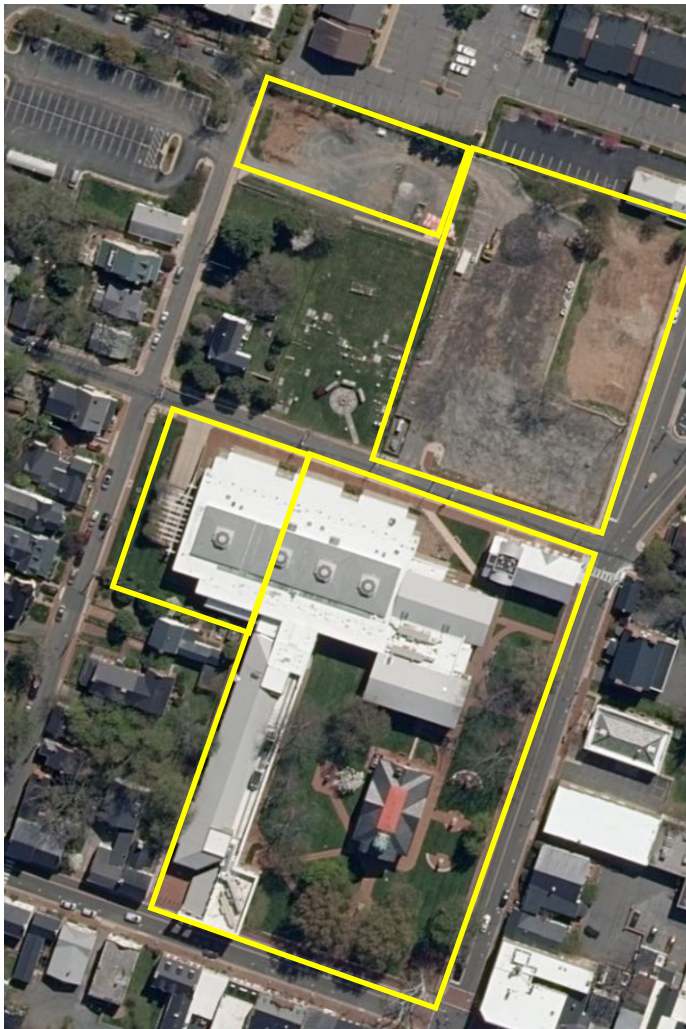
Courtyard through the Years: 1757-2020

"It shall be unlawful for any person or persons to play games on the Court House Lawn of this County, such as baseball, softball and other games of an athletic type, or ride a horse or bicycle on and over said lawn or pavements thereon."

BOS Minute Book 8 1937-1944, Page 303



Aerial Photograph of the courthouse grounds, 1979
 By the 1970s the courthouse grounds had expanded to over 2 acres.
 Courtesy of Loudoun Mapping and Geographic Information

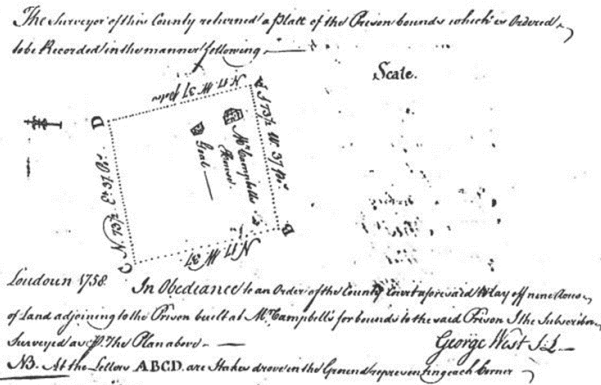


Aerial Photograph of the courthouse grounds, 2020
 In 2020 the courthouse complex and grounds consist of 5.24 acres.
 Courtesy of Loudoun Mapping and Geographic Information

Courthouse and Grounds

263 Years of Loudoun's Court Complex:

County Jail 1757-2007 –By Shannon Fuller

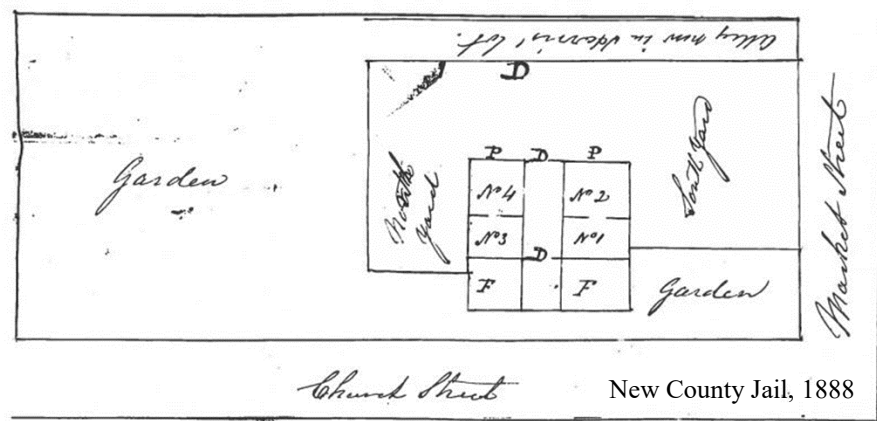


First jail located at Raspberry Plain, 1757
Court Order Book A

Jails in the Town of Leesburg date back to the formation of Loudoun County in 1757 when the western portion of Fairfax County was divided to form Loudoun. The first documented jail in Leesburg was built by John Trammel in 1757 on land later known as Raspberry Plain, located north of Leesburg on a branch of a Limestone Run. The first jail or goal as they were known at the time was described as follows: "...12' square, hewn logs at least 6" thick, mortise and tenon joinery". In the 18th century, five more jails were built in Leesburg, most of which were built on the same parcel of land referred to as the "Courthouse Lot".

Due to disrepair, a new jail was built in 1814, on the corner of Church Street and Market Street, and all subsequent jails after this would be built on the same parcel of land. According to the Leesburg Jail Intensive-Level Survey (2007), "...the location was chosen due to its proximity across the street from the Loudoun County courthouse, yet far enough to protect the courthouse and clerk's office from the danger of fire".

In 1888, the 1814 jail was demolished, and a new jail was constructed by Norris Bros., a well-known and prosperous building firm. The architect was Lemuel Norris, and the iron and steel work was completed by Pauly Jail Building Company. According to the [Washingtonian](#) publication, Lemuel Norris' plans for the 1888 jail were as follows: "



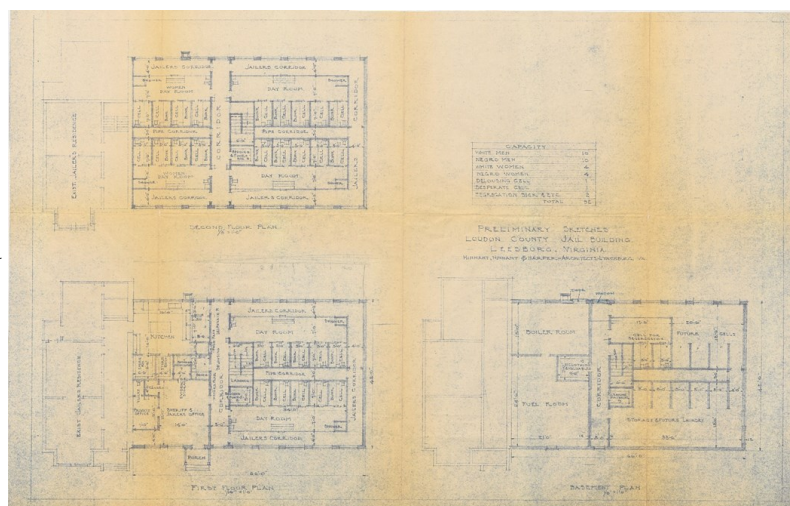
It is to be of brick and will be located on the site of the old jail and will be two stories high. The dwelling of the Jailor will contain a parlor, dining room, kitchen &c., on the first floor, and three chambers on the second floor, while the jail proper will have three steel cages on the first floor and two cells of plated iron, one below, and the other above, with water closet, heating apparatus, bathroom and other conveniences..."



County Jail, and 1888 Sheriff's Residence , 1954
 Courtesy Thomas Balch Library

The jail would not see a demolition again until 1954 when a southern wing was built. In 1954, all but a portion of the 1888 jailor's residence of the building was demolished. The 1888 jail was demolished due to poor condition of the building's plumbing which no longer met current health code requirements. Another reason for demolition, according to a 1949 report and inspection, was that the jail had "poor facilities for segregation". Local and state legislation during this time required "separate but equal facilities for black and white citizens."

The architect for the 1954 jail, C.H. Hinnant, specifically proposed that the jail cells be on two different levels so that male and female prisoners could be easily segregated by race. The following "alterations and additions" and "preliminary sketches" for the 1954 jail show the changes that were proposed including: segregated cells on the upper and lower level; delousing cell; juvenile cell; insane cell, linen room; dishwashing/laundry room; small evidence storage room, office space, jailor's apartment, and more.



Blueprints for 1954 Jail Expansion
 Clerk of the Circuit Jail Papers

In 1966, Honorable Ryner Sneed ordered that the jail be expanded with another wing addition to the structure. The new wing was necessary due to over-crowding in the jail which had been an issue since at least 1962. The remaining 1888 portion of the jailor's residence was demolished so the new wing could be added to the existing structure. This expansion almost doubled the jail's capacity from thirty-one to sixty inmates. Other features that were added during this construction included: a jail canteen that sold luxury items including tobacco products and candy; commercial grade equipment for the kitchen and laundry; and the addition of television and radio.



In 2007, the Leesburg Jail structure was completely demolished, and a new facility was built, the Loudoun County Adult Detention located at Loudoun Center Place off of Sycolin Road in Leesburg. The jail lot at Church and Market Street was first replaced by a parking lot, and in the near future will be the location for the new General District Court structure that is currently under construction.

Jail prior to demolition, 2007

Sources

Circuit Court Archives Files, History of Jail at Market and Church Street from Order Books, Historic Records Department, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Loudoun County, Virginia.

[Circuit Court Archives Files, History of Loudoun County Jail from Order Books, Historic Records Department, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Loudoun County, Virginia.](#)

Circuit Court Archives Files, Jail Plans and Correspondence, Historic Records Department, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Loudoun County, Virginia.

Leesburg Jail Intensive-Level Survey. Prepared for Loudoun County. Shaffer, Wilson, Sarver & Gray, PC, Reston, Virginia. 2007.

[Loudoun County Miscellaneous Papers, Jail, Historic Records Department, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Loudoun County, Virginia.](#)

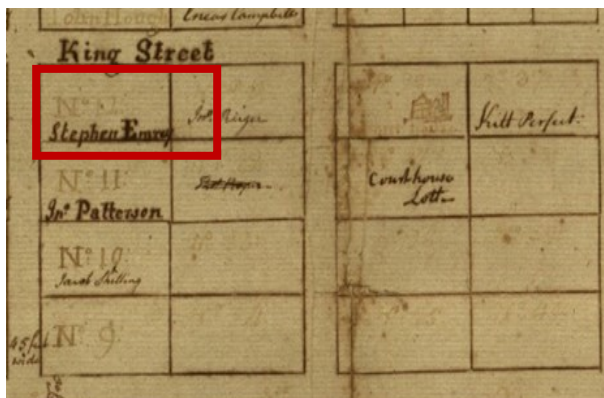
Loudoun County Miscellaneous Papers, Jail, Jail Construction 1954, Historic Records Department, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Loudoun County, Virginia.

Washingtonian, 1811-1879, Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, Virginia.

Winslow Williams Photograph Collection (VC 0003), 1925-1980, Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA.

Historical Events at the Courthouse By Lori Kimball & Eric Larson

Court Terms and Taverns



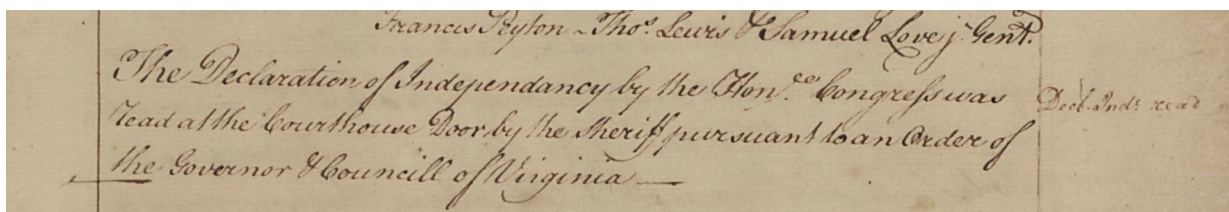
The earliest courthouse records for licenses to operate an ordinary date to 1768. An ordinary was a place that served food at a fixed price. Stephen Emery purchased lot #12 in February 1758 after the town of Leesburg was planned out. Mr. Emery was a blacksmith, whose property was conveniently located at the intersection of two major transportation routes: the north-south road of King Street and the east-west road of Market Street. His shop and ordinary were easily accessible to both local residents and travelers. The justices and lawyers at the courthouse probably enjoyed meals – and possibly libations – at Stephen Emery's ordinary.

Stephen Emory Lot on the corner of King and Loudoun St
Leesburg Plat, 1759 Historic Records Plats

Declaration of Independence

"The Declaration of Independence by the Hon. Congress was read at the courthouse door by the sheriff pursuant to an order of the Governor & Council of Virginia."

August 12, 1776, Order Book G, page 1



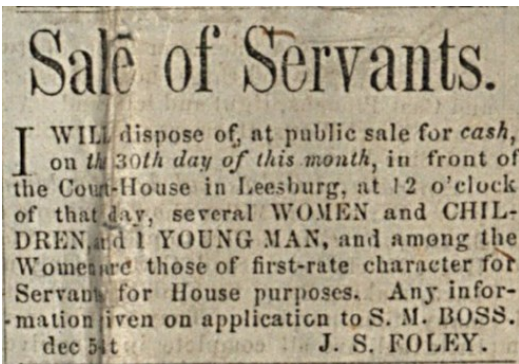
On August 12, 1776 Josias Clapham, George West, Francis Peyton, Thomas Lewis and Samuel Love were given the official Oath as Justices for Loudoun County, Commonwealth of Virginia in the United States of America. After the Oath was administered, the Declaration of Independence was read by the Sheriff on the Court House steps in accordance with an Order from the Governor and Council of Virginia.

George K. Fox, Jr. The Clerk Who Saved the Records

George K. Fox, Jr. was born 1832 in Loudoun County, Virginia, and was the Clerk of the County Court of Loudoun from 1862-1865 and again from 1870-1872. Little is known of George K. Fox, who left no letters or diaries to shed light on the court records being saved during the Civil War. He was known as a generous man who was quick to lend money to others in need. Fox had four daughters, the last being born after the Civil War. Fox died suddenly of typhoid fever at 40 forcing his family to sell his farm to settle his accounts. His daughters moved out of Loudoun leaving very little information on their father and family.

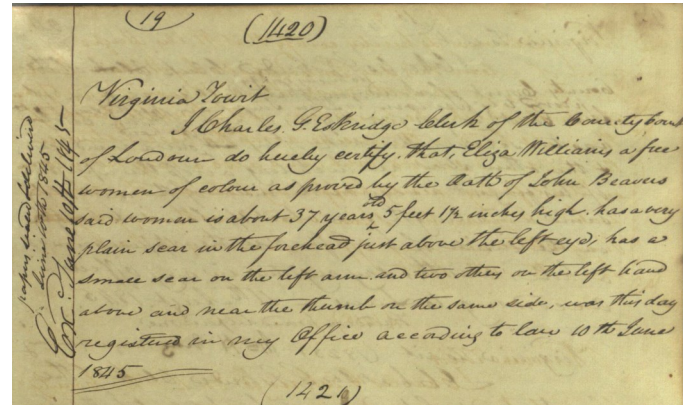


Freed and Enslaved African Americans



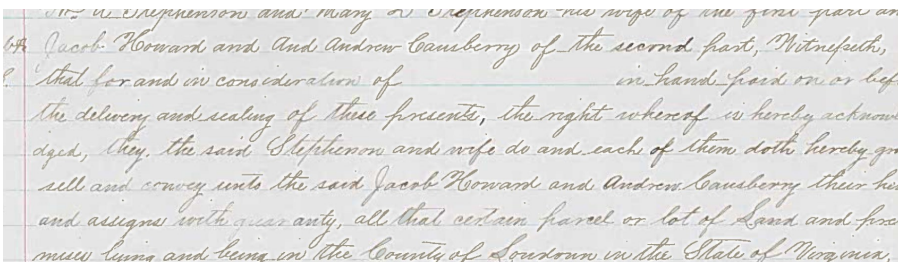
"...on the 30th day of this month, in front of the Court House in Leesburg, at 12 o'clock of that day, several Women and Children and 1 young man, and among the Women are those of first-rate character for Servants for House purposes."

Washingtonian Newspaper, Leesburg, Loudoun County No.21, December 5, 1856



Beginning in 1793, the courthouse held all the deeds of emancipation of newly freed slaves. The court issued "Freedom Papers" to be held at all times by Free Black individual, and the court retain the original emancipation papers.

Establishment of Howardsville



Records of Free Negroes 1844-1861

Free Black Papers 1757-1865

In 1874, 9 years after the end of slavery, Jacob Howard and Andrew Causeberry purchased 4 acres of land in western Loudoun County on present-day Route 719 (Greengarden Road), not far from Upperville. The parcel was part of the plantation of Jacob's former enslavers, William and Mary Stephenson. Others followed and the community of Howardsville was established. Jacob and his wife Sophia built a home, raised a family, and made a new life in freedom. Their descendants still own properties there. Howardsville remains one of the few intact African American communities in Loudoun that were formed after the Civil War.

Deed Book 6H-251

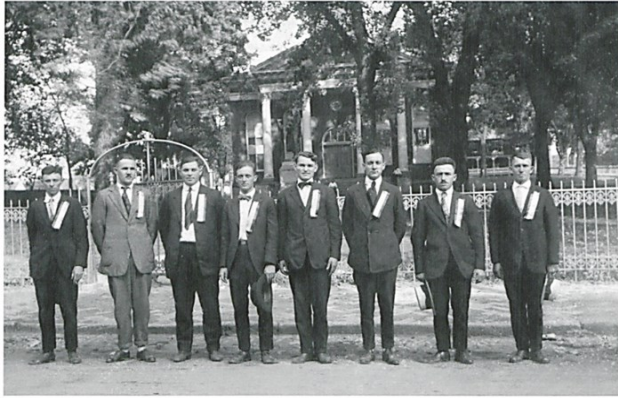
Commonwealth vs. Crawford, 1934



Exhibit from Crawford Murder Trial
CR1932-090

Charles Hamilton Houston, prominent legal counsel to the NAACP and Dean of Howard University's Law School, argued in Loudoun County one of the most important cases in the early civil rights movement. In 1933, he led a team of Black lawyers who fought against the segregated jury process and ability to get a fair trial. Their client, George Crawford, was accused of murdering a prominent white woman from Middleburg and her maid. Although Mr. Crawford was sentenced to life in prison, a sentence other than the death penalty was an advancement at that time, especially because both judge and jury were white. This case that was argued in Loudoun's historic courthouse raised public awareness about unfair jury practices (eventually declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court) and furthered the demands for equal justice.

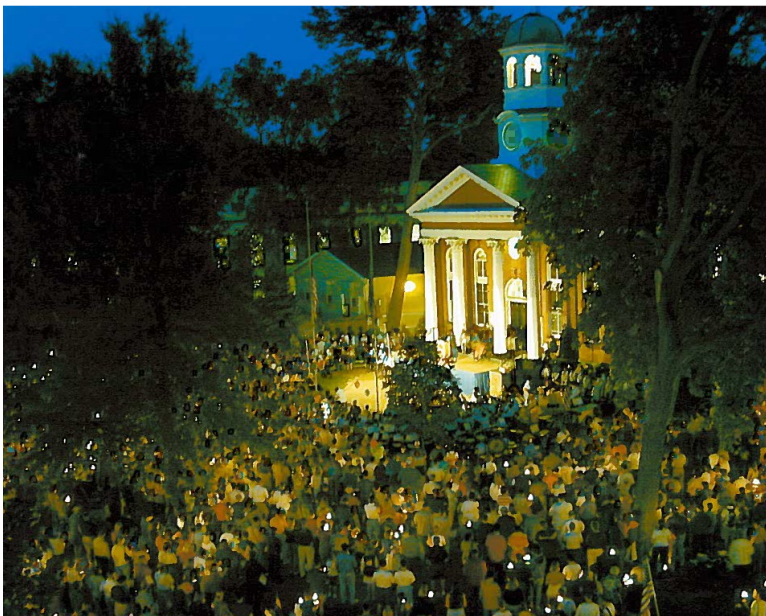
World War I *"On Saturday July 8, (1922) with solemn and impressive ceremonies the tablet to the memory of thirty immortal heroes from Loudoun county who made the supreme sacrifice in the great war (World War I) was unveiled in the court house yard in Leesburg.... one of the largest crowds ever assembled in the historic town of Leesburg was present to pay homage to Loudoun's soldier dead."*
 Loudoun Times Mirror, July 13, 1922



Loudoun Veterans from World War I, 1922
 Courtesy of Loudoun Museum



Loudoun's WWI Memorial Dedication, July 8, 1922
 Photograph taken from the front steps of the court-
 house facing N. King St.
 Courtesy Thomas Balch Library
 Photographic Collection



September 11, 2001

Candlelight ceremony honoring the victims of the 9/11 attacks

2021 PROGRAMS



Join us June 3 @ 6:30pm for a MOOVING program on Loudoun's dairy farming!

Where: Virtual Program

Date: June 3, 2021

Time: 6:30-8:30

Loudoun County was once home to over 400 dairy farms. Today there is just one. Join the Historic Records Department of the Clerk of Circuit Court and the Loudoun Heritage Farm Museum for a presentation about Loudoun's dairy industry then and now and Pidgeon Hill Farm in Sterling.

Go to: loudoun.gov/clerk/archives to sign into the program

Sponsored by:

Gary M. Clemens
Clerk of the Circuit Court
&

Loudoun Heritage Farm Museum



Join Event

<https://loudoun.gov.webex.com/loudoun-gov/onstage/g.php?MTID=ef1ff762c0dc299c89aa2a163cd461b0b>

Meeting password: 060321

September-Back to School

**Virtual Program , September 9, 2021, 6:30-8:00PM,
The Early Classrooms of Loudoun County 1757-1861**

Join for us for a virtual presentation about Loudoun's historic schools before 1865.

October-Court House Archaeology *

First Friday – October 1, 2021 from 6-8 PM – The Ground Holds Secrets: 35 Years of Courthouse Archaeology

The Historic Records team will partner with Heidi Siebentritt, the county's Historic Preservation Planner, and Steve Thompson, County Archaeologist, to present a program about the archaeological work done at the Courthouse grounds. Artifacts will be on display.

COVID protocol will determine if this is a public or virtual event.

WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

O	N	C	K	G	Z	O	C	X	A	S	D	A	Q	Y
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D	A	Z	R	M	A	V	Y	R	E	M	E	N	K	R
I	V	N	I	R	P	L	N	N	G	A	N	E	C	E
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P	O	D	J	Q	E	L	X	H	U	F	I	W	G	M
C	O	N	S	E	R	V	A	T	I	O	N	T	A	T

AENEAS
CONSERVATION
FOX
LEMUEL
ORDINARY

BRICK
COURTHOUSE
HINNANT
LUEBERS
RASPBERRY

CAMPBELL
ELIZA
HOUSTON
MORDECAI
TRAMMEL

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